

In the Specification:

Please amend the specification as shown:

Please delete the paragraph on page 24, lines 9-21, and replace it with the following paragraph:

Real-time quantitative polymerase chain reactions specific for the human cytoplasmic β -actin sequence were carried out using a commercial hot-start *Taq* DNA polymerase reaction cocktail as follows. Each 50 μ l PCR contained 1X iQ PCR SuperMix (Bio-Rad Laboratories), 200 nM each primer, and 100 nM FAM and TAMRA labeled 5'-nuclease probe as described by Xu et al. 2000, Focus 22:3-5 (forward primer: 5'-CCTGGCACCCAGCACAAT-3' (**SEQ ID NO: 1**); reverse primer: 5'-GGGCCGGACTCGTCATAC-3' (**SEQ ID NO: 2**); Taqman probe: 5'-FAM-AGCCGCCGATCCACACGGAGT-TAMRA-3' (**SEQ ID NO: 3**)), and varying amounts of a DNA target. Triplicate PCRs were performed for each amount of input DNA (1×10^2 , 1×10^4 , 1×10^6 , or 1×10^8 copies of a plasmid containing the gene encoding human cytoplasmic β -actin). PCRs were conducted under identical conditions except for the inclusion of varying amounts (0.1%, 0.01%, 0.001%, 0.0001%, or 0) of anti-foam 1520-US from Dow Corning.

Please delete the paragraph on page 25, line 33, to page 26, line 12, and replace it with the following paragraph:

Real-time quantitative polymerase chain reactions specific for the human cytoplasmic β -actin sequence were carried out using a commercial hot-start *Taq* DNA polymerase reaction cocktail modified for use with SYBR Green I as follows. Each 50 μ l PCR contained 1X iQ PCR SuperMix (Bio-Rad Laboratories), 2% DMSO, 0.25X SYBR Green I (Molecular Probes), 300 nM each primer, as described by Xu et al. 2000, Focus 22:3-5 (forward primer: 5'-CCTGGCACCCAGCACAAT-3' (**SEQ ID NO: 1**); reverse primer: 5'-GGGCCGGACTCGTCATAC-3' (**SEQ ID NO: 2**)), and varying amounts of a DNA target. Triplicate PCRs were performed for each amount of input DNA (1×10^2 , 1×10^4 , 1×10^6 , or 1×10^8 copies of a plasmid containing the gene encoding human cytoplasmic β -actin). PCRs were conducted under identical conditions except for the inclusion of 0.005% of anti-foam selected from different commercially available preparations from Dow Corning (1520-US, AF, or FG-10) or Sigma (O-30, SE-15, or Antifoam B). Control reactions omitted anti-foam.